CHAPTER **12**

Problems and Barriers to Overcome in Fitness

Questions

- **When you talked with people who do not engage in regular physical activity or fitness programs, did they provide any reasons for their lack of participation?**
- **If you are someone who regularly engages in fitness, could you understand their position?**
- **If they asked you for help starting, what would you suggest?**

Objectives

- **Describe the human and economic costs associated with obesity.**
- **Discuss the various factors that contribute to obesity and how disparities create disproportional consequences.**
- **Explain how fitness is part of a healthy life span.**

Why Fitness Matters

- **All types of physical activities are important for a healthy and active lifestyle.**
- **Health-related fitness is most strongly associated with the prevention of hypokinetic diseases.**
- **The modern world has shifted how we work and play; therefore, approaches to promote health also must change.**

Complexity of the Obesity Epidemic

- **An epidemic affects everyone everywhere; local solutions will not work on a large scale.**
- **Complex interaction of various factors: policies, built environment, socioeconomic status**
- **Far-reaching consequences of obesity**
  - **Personal physical and mental health**
  - **Public expenditures and economic burden**
- **Physical activity and healthy eating are easier said than done.**

Costs of Inadequate Fitness

- **Inadequate fitness is a public health problem requiring massive annual government expenditures.**
- **Fitness is not all about personal responsibility.**
- **Underserved or disadvantaged populations are disproportionally affected; systemic and pervasive disparities increase health risks.**

Factors Impacting Obesity

- ***Standard/simple equation*: Calories in > Calories out; reduce calories in and increase calories out**
- ***Social and economic disparities* limit access to healthy food and reduce opportunities for physical activity and fitness.**
- ***The environment* has changed by suppressing physical activity and increasing sedentary behaviors.**

Short- and Long-Term Fitness Behaviors

- 90% of American adults think fitness is important, but only about 20% achieve sufficient levels of fitness (Healthy People 2020).
- If people know, why don’t they do? The increasing number of competing AND sedentary activities (e.g., streaming media, social media, video games).
- Start small and build; do what you can, and then progressively try to do a little more.
- Start early and sustain; increase physical activity behaviors in youths and build support throughout the life span.

Developing Self-Efficacy

- **Self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) defines the perceived capability to engage in activities ("I *can* do this").**
- **Create sensations of enjoyment and success, then gradually increase the challenge.**
- **Emphasize the process of developing fitness. Focus on time, not frequency: "Do this for 30 seconds," as opposed to "Do 30 repetitions."**

Developing a Fitness-Educated Public

- **The technological age has produced an explosion of information, but not all is quality/credible information.**
- **Media portrayals can have serious impacts on behaviors.**
  - **Unrealistic body image**
  - **Celebrities are perceived as experts**
- **It is important to develop physically educated individuals.**
  - **Know, do, and think about physical activity and fitness**
  - **Quality physical education**

Equity Issues in Fitness and Activity

- **Opportunity is not equally distributed.**
  - **Socioeconomic status**
  - **Race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability status, location**
- **Consistent trends show that on average**
  - **females are less active than males,**
  - **Black and Latino groups are less active than whites, and**
  - **lower socioeconomic status results in lower physical activity.**
- **Beyond personal choices, who you are and where you live impacts your health significantly.**

Helping Girls Become More Active

- **Across all racial and economic levels, girls are less active than boys.**
- **Participation in fitness and sport has increased, but the majority of girls do not meet fitness or physical activity guidelines.**
- **Specific programs and systems are needed.**
  - **Specialized coaches and trainers**
  - **Supportive psychosocial climate**
  - **Positive role models and body image**
  - **Individualized approach to participation**

Fitness Issues Within Physical Education

- **Physical activity and health-related fitness are related.**
- **Reducing physical education decreases fitness.**
  - **Lower dose = lower response**
- **Fitness is a measurable outcome and can be combined with physical education standards.**

Fitness Testing in Schools

- **Types of fitness testing**
  - **Self-testing**
  - **Individual testing**
  - **Institutional testing**
  - **Assessing personal best performance**
- **Each type should be purposeful with associated outcomes**
  - **Self-testing for personal growth**
  - **Institutional testing to determine status of larger population**
- **Fitness testing ≠ academic grading**

Fitness and Aging

- **Older adults represent an increasingly larger proportion of the U.S. population.**
- **Perceptions of appropriate amounts and intensity of fitness have changed.**
- **Healthy aging can be achieved by developing or maintaining fitness and physical activity, which improves physical and mental health.**
- **Qualified fitness professionals are needed to deliver effective programming and support.**

Activity

- **Develop a program specifically designed to increase the number of girls participating in a community fitness program. List five things you would need to facilitate and support participation.**

- **Discuss the appropriate and inappropriate applications of fitness testing in schools. Which of these have you experienced?**

Summary

- **Barriers exist at a systemic level (e.g., ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability).**
- **Fitness is important for a healthy life span.**
- **Specific programs are needed for specific populations.**
- **Tasks/Assignments:**
- **Next Class:**